

Becky Fles, *President, MSAD 11*
James Grant, *President-Elect, Brunswick*
Maureen King, *Vice President, RSU 21*
Marlene Tallent, *Past President, Surry (Union 93)*
Dale A. Douglass., *Interim Executive Director, ddouglass@msmaweb.com*
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UPDATE..

June 2016

Douglass returns to MSMA



Dale Douglass

Former Executive Director Dale Douglass has returned to Maine School Management Association to serve as interim director until a search can be done for a permanent replacement

Douglass served as executive director for 17 years, retiring in 2012.

The director's position opened up when Director Dr. Connie Brown announced her resignation, effective June 30.

Brown has been the executive director since 2013 and before that served as the superintendent of the Augusta School Department for nearly 14 years. In her time at MSMA, she represented the association at the Statehouse and in the media on significant issues, helping secure more state aid for schools and support for important legislation affecting K-12 education.

Becky Fles, president of the Maine School Boards Association, thanked Brown for her work on behalf of students.

"Dr. Brown was an excellent public spokesperson for school boards and superintendents. We appreciate what she has done on behalf of school leaders and most importantly for students in the state of Maine," Fles said.

MSMA Fall Conference October 27-28

Plans are well underway for the 43rd Annual MSMA Fall Conference, which provides outstanding professional development clinics for school leaders and a chance for board members and superintendents to meet and share ideas.

Information packets have been sent out to superintendents and school board members. See pages 2 and 4 for reminders on board nominations, School Board resolutions and nominations for board awards.

The conference will be held at the Augusta Civic Center.



MSBA Directors Marlene Tallent and Jerry Nault at Commissioner's Conference

New federal school law up for local review

Education leaders in Maine are beginning to review the proposed rules that help define how the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaces No Child Left Behind, will be implemented on a state and local level.

Superintendents and other school leaders were part of a focus group at the recent Commissioner's Conference in Bangor, where the Department of Education presented an overview and then gave time for table discussions. Those discussions were captured on flip charts and the DOE is planning on publicizing the feedback on its ESSA site www.maine.gov/doe/essa/.

Stakeholder input is really a two-part process. First there will be time to comment on the proposed federal rules that will outline how the law itself will be implemented. That comment period ends on Aug. 1.

The second and perhaps most important phase of feedback will be when local school leaders and others review the DOE's proposed State Plan, which will essentially delineate the state's responsibilities under ESSA and those that are pushed down to the local level.

A key issue already being debated on the rules is whether the quality of a school can be boiled down to a single number.

While the law is more flexible in terms of the types of measures that will help determine school quality and student academic success, rules would require states to assign a single "comprehensive, summative rating" to each school. The ratings ultimately would determine which schools have to be targeted for help.

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Potential Nominees for At-Large and Regional Directors of the MSBA Executive Board of Directors

Per by-laws, the MSBA Nominating Committee will consider nominations for At-Large and Regional Director seats. All will be presented for election at the October 27 meeting of the MSBA Delegate Assembly.

Please note the following restrictions apply: a) only one member on an active regular member School Board is eligible to serve on the MSBA Board of Directors; and b) no more than three officers and/or directors can be members of School Boards in any one region. Note: Individuals serving on Associate Members Boards, including vocational regions, are ineligible to serve on the MSBA Board of Directors.

DEADLINE: Names of suggested nominees, who must be from MSBA member boards, must be received at MSMA by **July 14, 2016**, to assure consideration by the Nominating Committee. Remember to indicate the seat for which the person is being suggested. Regional Directors must be from the correct Region (click link below). A listing of the current Board of Directors is provided (click link below). Open seats are those expiring in 2016, interim appointments, or those indicating a vacancy. The Nominating Committee will advance a slate of nominees for consideration by the Delegate Assembly.

After the July 14 deadline, in order to nominate a candidate, two MSBA active member boards must file the Application for Nomination - Director form (click link below) along with a copy of the minutes of the board meetings indicating a formal vote in support of that nominee. This statement of endorsement must be received at the MSMA office at least 30 days prior to the Delegate Assembly—no later than **September 27**. In the case of an At-Large Director nominee, the endorsement can be done by any two active member boards. In the case of a Regional Director nominee, the endorsement must be done by two active member boards in that Region.

Anyone interested in more information on the duties of MSBA Board of Directors should contact Elaine Tomaszewski at 1-800-660-8484 or email etomaszewski@msmaweb.com.

[Region List](#), [MSBA Board of Directors](#), [MSBA Application for Nomination - Director](#)

A Call for Nomination of Board Awards

The MSBA Board of Directors calls for nominations for three awards in recognition of service in support of public education in Maine. The three award categories include:

- [MSBA Business Friend of Education Award](#)
- [MSBA Distinguished Service Award](#); and
- [MSBA School Board Service Certificate](#).

The MSBA **Business Friend of Education Award** may be awarded to no more than two companies located in Maine, which have made significant contributions to public education.

The MSBA **Distinguished Service Award** recognizes an individual or a group who has made a significant contribution to public education in Maine.

The MSBA **School Board Service Certificate** will recognize individual school board members for their length of service on a local school board. Any board member having served twelve or more years who did not receive a certificate in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015 is eligible to receive this certificate of recognition. **The nomination form must be received at MSMA no later than August 1, 2016.**

The criteria and the appropriate forms for each award category are linked above. **MSBA Business Friend of Education Award and MSBA Distinguished Service Award nomination forms must be received at MSMA no later than August 1, 2016.** If you have further questions, please call MSMA (1-800-660-8484) or email msma@msmaweb.com. A subcommittee of the MSBA Board of Directors will review all nominations, with the final selection being approved by the MSBA Board of Directors.

New federal school law

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Concerns were raised in Maine at such ratings when Gov. Paul LePage issued letter grades to all schools in 2013 and 2014. What the A-F grading system showed, not surprisingly, was districts with higher poverty levels got the lower grades. The grading system was put on hold when the state changed its standardized assessment.

Maine put new tests in place this year to replace those produced by Smarter Balanced, and the state will stick with those new tests next year, according to the DOE, giving districts at least one year's worth of comparable data.

That means those tests could inform school rankings, since under ESSA proposed rules, rankings for 2017-2018 would be made based on data from tests given in the 2016-2017 school year – another bone of contention for some. Opponents say 2016-2017 data shouldn't be used to make determinations since ESSA really doesn't go into effect until 2017-2018.

The federal government also is interested in feedback on how to address high opt-out rates on statewide testing – a problem that hit home in Maine when the Smarter Balanced test was used.

ESSA, like No Child Left Behind, requires annual standardized testing in grades 3-8 and once in high school, in English and math. ESSA also requires 95 percent participation, as did NCLB, but the question is what should happen if that 95 percent rate isn't achieved and what can be done to increase participation.

When it comes to putting together a State Plan, which will be done after the federal rules are amended and approved, there are key areas as well.

The proposed ESSA rules say State Plans must include a process to implement the following components.

Statewide Accountability System

That system must:

- ◆ Be based on challenging academic standards in English and math and designed to improve student academic achievement
- ◆ Involve all public schools in the state, including charter schools
- ◆ Establish long-term and interim progress goals
- ◆ Allow for meaningful differentiation of schools statewide to identify schools in need of comprehensive and targeted support for improvement
- ◆ Establish at least four indicators of student performance for all students and each subgroup including:
 - Annual statewide assessments in reading and math
 - Measurement of progress for English learners
 - Measurement of school quality and student success. Examples: student or educator engagement; student completion of advanced coursework; post-secondary readiness; school climate and safety.
 - Graduation rates from high schools; student growth or some other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.
- ◆ Assure, as was required under the old law, that at least 95 percent of all students are measured through the statewide assessment for proficiency in English and math.

Annual Ranking of Schools

ESSA requires each state to establish a meaningful way to differentiate schools, using the four indicators listed above and the progress made with English language learners. Academic indicators would be given substantially more weight than measurements of school quality and student success. (See examples above.)

The indicators ultimately will lead to a summative rating or single score or grade for each school – a proposal that is getting pushback nationwide. These ratings will inform which schools are high performing and low performing, and which should be identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement.

This approach will be used to identify schools beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, and at least once every three years after that, and will include three types of schools.

- ◆ The lowest performing 5 percent of Title I schools in the state
- ◆ Any public high school failing to graduate one-third or more of its students, and,
- ◆ Title I schools with a consistently underperforming subgroup that, on its own, is performing as poorly as all students in the lowest-performing five percent of Title I schools.

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Employee Spotlight Meet Mary Ellen Barrett



Administrative Assistant Mary Ellen Barrett is the person the front office relies on to keep track of the many details that go into running MSMA, handling legislative schedules, MSBA board meeting materials, website updates, correspondence and other responsibilities too numerous to mention.

Her former work as a committee clerk for the Education Committee at

the Legislature makes her invaluable during legislative season. She copy edits testimony; knows whom to call with questions on process; tracks bills; and, generally makes sure those testifying are where they need to be at the right time.

She started at MSMA in 2004, doing some of the work she does now, but her responsibilities have grown substantially – a change that suits her.

“I enjoy the people I work with, the fast-paced environment, and that each day brings new and varied job assignments,” she said.

Mary Ellen grew up in Winthrop, where she lives today, and graduated from the University of Maine at Farmington with a double major in Environmental Planning and Policy and Geography.

She’s been married for 10 years to her husband, Jon, and they have three children, ages 8, 6 and 3, whose photos and artwork adorn her work space. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, watching her children participate in various sporting events, gardening and music.

A Call for Resolutions

The Maine School Boards Association will be holding its annual Delegate Assembly in conjunction with the 43rd Annual Maine School Management Association Fall Conference scheduled for October 27 and 28 at the Augusta Civic Center. During the Delegate Assembly the election of the Officers and the Board of Directors of MSBA takes place. The Delegate Assembly also provides an opportunity for school board members to discuss and adopt resolutions that express the collective views of local school boards on current issues in education.

Each school board has the opportunity to submit to the MSBA Resolutions Committee subjects, positions, and rationales for possible resolutions to be considered by the 2016 Delegate Assembly.

Please identify the subject you would like considered, describe your position and briefly state your rationale using the form, below.

The deadline for receipt of your recommended resolutions is July 11 2016.

[A Call For Resolutions](#), [Proposed Resolution Topic Form](#)

New federal school law

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Subgroups include:

- ◆ Economically disadvantaged students
- ◆ Students from major racial and ethnic groups
- ◆ Children with disabilities, and
- ◆ English learners.

Improvement Plan Design

If a school is identified as needing improvement, the district, in partnership with local stakeholders, including principals, other school leaders, teachers and parents, is required to design and implement a plan that is in sync with the state’s long term goals, as described in the State Plan.

The local districts would do a needs assessment, reviewing academic achievement data; the performance of subgroups; the reasons why the school was identified as needing support and improvement; and, at the local district’s discretion, the school’s performance on locally selected indicators that are not required by the state.

The plan must include one or more interventions, for example, increasing student access to effective teachers, redesigning instructional time, or replacing school leadership. Plans must be approved by the state, which also must design exit criteria for getting off the needs improvement list. Local districts would be eligible for school improvement funds allocated by the state.

Discussion will continue around these and other topics, and additional information will be provided through newsletters and bulletins.

Teacher of Year semifinalists

The Maine Department of Education in partnership with Educate Maine, has named eight teachers as semifinalists for Maine’s 2017 Teacher of the Year.

The semifinalists are: **Aroostook:** Michael McCartney, Maine School of Science and Mathematics, Limestone; **Cumberland:** Morgan Cuthbert, Harrison Middle School, Yarmouth; **Franklin:** Selina Warren, Kingfield Elementary School, Kingfield; **Hancock:** Rebecca Tapley, Brooklin Elementary School, Brooklin; **Kennebec:** Andrew Forster, Messalonskee High School, Oakland; **Knox:** Beth Heidemann, Cushing Community School, Cushing; **Penobscot:** Cherrie MacInnes, Brewer Community School, Brewer; **Somerset:** Tamara Ranger, Skowhegan Area Middle School, Skowhegan



If you have questions about any articles in this newsletter or suggestions for improving this publication, let us know. You can contact me, MSBA Executive Director, Dale Douglass.
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